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THE
EMIGRANT,

OR

REFLECTIONS

WHILE DESCENDING THE OHIO.

A Poem,

BY FREDERICK W. THOMAS.

"Westward the star of Empire takes its way."

From the original Edition of 1833, to which is
added a memoir of the author.

CINCINNATI:
PRINTED FOR J. DRAKE.

SPILLER, PRINTER.

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PREFACE.

THIS POEM was written under the circumstances which its title implies. Three years since, as the author was descending the Ohio, to become a citizen of the West, he wrote a considerable number of stanzas, expressive of his feelings, six or eight of which were published as a fragment on his arrival in Cincinnati, in the Commercial Daily Advertiser, and republished and noticed by different prints in a way that induced the author, from time to time, to add stanzas to stanzas, until they almost imperceptibly reached their present number. He wrote on, without any previous study of the style or manner in which the subject should be pursued—using the poetic license of light and shade as Fancy dictated. Being in ill health, and coming to a strange land, it was very natural for his Reflections to be of a sombre cast, without there being any thing peculiar in his situation differing from that of other Emigrants.

The reader will perceive that the metrical arrangement of the stanzas is the same as that used by Gray, in his Ode to Adversity, with this difference, that the Ode is written in lines of eight syllables, and the author has attempted the heroic measure.

After the Poem had been finished some time, the author delivered it in the Hall of the Lyceum to an assemblage of Ladies and Gentlemen. Their reception and that of the several editors (to whom he is most grateful) who noticed its delivery, and gave extracts from the Poem, induced him to publish it.

The author has by him many manuscript pieces with which he might have swelled the volume to a much greater size; but as this is his first attempt at authorship, in the shape of a volume, he offers it, tremblingly, at the ordeal of public opinion, merely as a sample of his ware.

DEDICATION.

TO CHARLES HAMMOND, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

Before I had the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, differing from you as I do on many political points, I imbibed some of those impressions against you, which ever attach to an exalted character, when he takes a decided stand in the political arena.

Permit me, Sir, in acknowledging how much those impressions were prejudices, to inscribe this volume to you, in testimony of my admiration for your talents, and respect for your virtues. And, moreover, as the first encouragement which I received, for this my first literary attempt of any length, proceeded from yourself; if it has merit, I know no one to whom I should more properly inscribe it than to the one, who being entitled to speak *ex cathedra* on the subject, first cheered me with the hope of its success. And if it shall be found to be destitute of merit, while it shows that your judgment has for once been wrong, it will also prove that the error proceeded from a personal partiality, for which I am anxious to express my gratitude.

I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your obliged friend and humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

CINCINNATI, *April* 23, 1833.

MEMOIR.

Frederick William Thomas was the oldest child of E. S. Thomas and Anna his wife. He was born at Providence Rhode Island, but spent his earlier years at Charleston South Carolina, where Mr. E. S. Thomas resided and edited and published the Charleston City Gazette.

While Frederick William was still young, Mr. Thomas removed to Baltimore Maryland, and there his son was educated and brought up to the profession of the law. Being unfortunate in business, when Frederick William was about nineteen, Mr. Thomas resolved to remove with his family to the west, which he did, making Cincinnati his place of residence. His son however, remained in Baltimore.

It was in the following year while journeying West, to join his family in their new home, that this poem—the Emigrant was suggested to him, by the associations and the romantic scenery of the Ohio river, and while descending it most, if not all the poem, was written. He was about twenty-one when it appeared. It was followed by "Clinton Bradshaw," or the adventures of a Lawyer, published by Carey, Lee and Blanchard, of Philadelphia. This was called the best American Novel of its time. Mr. Thomas' next venture was "East and West" which was succeeded by "Howard Pinkney." During the years which interven-

ed between the writing of these books he resided in the west, principally in Cincinnati, and wrote tales, sketches, fugitive poetry, delivered lectures, and made political speeches. In 1840 when General Harrison was elected President, Mr. Thomas went to Washington City. After General Harrison's death, Mr. Tyler gave him an office under government and he continued to reside at the Capital, but wrote little except an occasional song or story. Some years elapsed and Mr. Thomas left Washington and went south on a lecturing tour. He was engaged to write for several newspapers and continued lecturing through the South and West. His literary efforts at this period were chiefly confined to Magazine articles, short poems and songs. His song "Tis said that Absence conquers Love," was one of the most popular of the day. He often spoke of the feeling he had in passing of a summers night through a strange city and having his own words greet him from houses whose inmates only knew of his existence through them.

Clinton Bradshaw was also very popular. An American visiting Calcutta India, wrote home of the thrill it gave him to find it on the shelves of a book store there.

Mr. Thomas was popular in society for he was amiable and entertaining. He was a fine belle letter scholar, and was remarkable for his conversationable powers—he had a fund of anecdote always at command. He was a great observer and studier of Character and a believer in human nature.

The year 1866 found him again in Washington city where after a short illness he died. Recently his remains have been brought to Cincinnati, by his brother Calvin W. Thomas and placed beside those of his parents in Spring Grove Cemetery.

The Emigrant,

OR

REFLECTIONS¹

WHILE DESCENDING THE OHIO.

I.

WE both are pilgrims, wild and winding river!
Both wandering onward to the boundless West—
But thou art given by the good All-giver,
Blessing a land to be in turn most blest:²
While, like a leaf-borne insect, floating by,
Chanceful and changeful is my destiny;
I needs must follow where thy currents lave—
Perchance to find a home, or else, perchance a grave.

II.

Yet, dost thou bear me on to one I've loved
From Boyhood's thoughtlessness to Manhood's thought,
In all the changes of our lives, unmoved—
That young affection no regret has brought:
Beloved one! when I seem Fortune's slave,
Reckless and wrecked upon the wayward wave,
Bright Hope, the Halcyon, rises o'er the sea,
Calming the troubled wave—bearing my heart to thee.

III.

Alas! we parted: what a bitter sorrow
Clings to the memory of our last embrace!
No joy to-day, no promise of to-morrow,
No idol image, shall usurp thy place:
For thee my holiest hope is upward given—
My love for thee is with my love for Heav'n,
A dedication of my heart to thine,
With God to smile on both, and consecrate the shrine.

IV.

Our home, when last I saw it, was all lone;
Yet my affections peopled it with those
Whose sunny smile upon my boyhood shone;
Then came reality,—the heart-spring froze:—
There was the stream, the willow, and the wild wood,
Where, emulous of height, in playing childhood,
With hearts encircled, on the beechen tree,
Dear one, I carved thy name, but then thou wert with me.

V.

Thou wert my nurse in many an hour of pain,
My comforter in many an hour of sadness;
And when my spirit leaped to joy again,
Thou wert the one who joyed most in its gladness.
Ay, more than nurse—and more than comforter—
Thou taught'st my erring spirit not to err,
Gave it a softness nature had not given,
As now the blessed moon makes earth resemble heav'n.

VI.

How deep the bitterness alone to grieve
In grief's deep hour—the death-watch of the night—
When Fancy can no more her day dreams weave,
And there seems madness in the moon's pale light—
When sorrow holds us, like a life-long state,
Not as a portion, but the whole of fate,
When the mind yields, like sick men to their dreams,
Who know all is not right, yet know not that which seems.

VII.

Why come such thoughts across the brow? Oh, why
Cannot the soul sit firmly on her throne,
And keep beside her strong Philosophy?
Alas! I am a wanderer and alone.
Beneath deep feeling reason's self must sink;
We cannot change the thought, yet we *must* think;
And, O! how darkly come such thoughts to me—
The gathered pangs of years, recounting agony.

VIII.

Who has not felt, in such a night as this,
The glory and the greatness of a God,
And bowed his head, in humbleness, to kiss
His merciful and kindly chast'ning rod?
The far off stars! how beautiful and bright!
Peace seems abroad upon the world to-night;
And e'en the bubble, dancing on the stream,
Is glittering with hope,—a dream—a very dream!

IX.

In sickness and in sorrow, how the breast
Will garner its affections in their home!
Like stricken bird that cowers within its nest,
And feels no more an anxiousness to roam;
While a thick darkness, like a cloud, comes o'er
The gallant spirit;— it can rise no more
To wing its way, as if it sought the sky,
But falls to earth, forlorn, as though it fell to die.

X.

And yet, there is a torturing sense of life,
E'en in the feeling of the quick drawn breath,
That tells of many years of woe and strife,
Ekeing our being out, though bringing death:
While Fancy, with a thousand thronging tales,
Now in her gladness, now in woe, prevails,—
Till the dark moment of o'erwhelming grief,
When sorrow mourns as one who cannot find relief.

XI.

Is health returnless? Never more may I
Throw by the staff on which, alas! I lean?
Is the woof woven of my destiny?
Shall I ne'er be again what I have been?
And must th' bodily anguish be combined
With the intenseness of the anxious mind?
The fever of the fame and of the soul,
With no medicinal draught to quell it or control.

XII.

Upon my brow I feel the furrow's course,
Deep sinking inward to the source of thought;
The deeper sinking if I seek its source,
Or try to crush its agony, unsought,
O! tell thy secret, thou stern vampyre, Care!
E'en for Philosophy thou hast a snare,
For in thy quest she wears the galling chain,
Making the burden more, the more she'd soothe its pain.

XIII.

Sweet solace of the life-lorn! HOPE! to thee
How oft in loneliness the heart will turn,
To quell the pang of its keen misery;
While wailing sorrow weeps o'er memory's urn:
Rise from the ashes of my buried years!
The past comes up with overflowing tears,
To quench the promises that would arise:—
They're in the future far—where are they?—in the skies!

XIV.

My hopes, e'en my hopes, wither; a dark cloud
Has passed between them and the glorious sun,
Clothing the breathing being in a shroud—
The pall is o'er them and their race is run:
Their epitaph is written in my heart—
The all of mem'ry that can ne'er depart—
Yes, it is here! the truth of every dream,
The ever-present thought, in every varying theme.

XV.

O ! who can pierce the cloud that o'er him lowers?
It were as vain my wayward fate to scan ;
Enough, 'twill come with th' onhurrying hours—
The futile purpose or the settled plan :
Or Death, perchance, e'en now each tie may sever !
There's many a grave in this bright rolling river,
That's bounding onward where the one I love,
To meet my coming, now, on its far banks may rove.

XVI.

And, but that thou would'st feel a pang for me,
'Twere sweet, methinks, to sleep beneath the wave;
Its murmuring song, like sweetest minstrelsy,
Would rest a wanderer in an early grave,
Within thee, River, many a pale face sleeps—
And many a redman's ghost his vigil keeps—
And many a maid has watched the dark banks over—
He comes not, yet, in truth, he was a faithful lover.

XVII.

For then, perchance, thy stream ran red with blood,
Then pale and red men met upon thy shore—
Embracing foes they sunk within the flood,
Fierce twins in death, and joined forevermore,—
Forevermore in time. Eternity !
Thy doom we see not, and we may not see,
But God is just ! to Him the red race fly,
Driv'n to the pathless West, thence upward to the sky.

XVIII.

Here once Boone trod—the hardy Pioneer—
The only white man in the wilderness :³
Oh ! how he loved, alone, to hunt the deer,
Alone, at eve, his simple meal to dress ;
No mark upon the tree, nor print, nor track,
To lead him forward, or to guide him back ;
He roved the forest, king by main and might,
And looked up to the sky and shaped his course aright.

XIX.

That mountain, there, that lifts its bald high head
Above the forest, was, perchance, his throne ;
There has he stood and marked the woods outspread,
Like a great kingdom, that was all his own ;
In hunting shirt and moccasins arrayed,
With bear skin cap, and pouch, and needful blade,
How carelessly he leaned upon his gun !
That sceptre of the wild, that had so often won.

XX.

Those western Pioneers an impulse felt.
Which their less hardy sons scarce comprehend ;
Alone, in Nature's wildest scenes, they dwelt,
Where crag, and precipice, and torrent blend,
And stretched around the wilderness, as rude
As the red rovers of its solitude,
Who watched their coming with a hate profound,
And fought with deadly strife for every inch of ground.

XXI.

To shun a greater ill sought they the wild?
No! they left happier lands behind them far,
And brought the nursing mother and her child
To share the dangers of the border war;
The log-built cabin from the Indian barred,
Their little boy, perchance, kept watch and ward,
While Father ploughed with rifle at his back,
Or sought the gluttoned foe through many a devious track.

XXII.

How cautiously, yet fearlessly, that boy
Would search the forest for the wild beast's lair,
And lift his rifle with a hurried joy
If chance he spied the Indian lurking there:
And should they bear him prisoner from the fight,
While they are sleeping in the dead midnight,
He slips the thongs that bind him to the tree,
And leaving death with them, bounds home right happily.⁴

XXIII.

Before the mother, bursting through the door,
The redman rushes where her infants rest;
Oh God! he hurls them on the cabin floor!
While she, down kneeling, clasps them to her breast.
How he exults and revels in her woe,
And lifts the weapon, yet delays the blow:
Ha! that report! behold! he reels! he dies!
And quickly to her arms the husband—father—flies.

XXIV.

In the long winter eve, their cabin fast,
The big logs blazing in the chimney wide—
They'd hear the Indian howling, or the blast,
And deem themselves in castellated pride :
Then would the fearless forester disclose
Most strange adventures with his sylvan foes,
Of how his arts did over theirs prevail,
And how he followed far upon their bloody trail.

XXV.

And it was happiness, they said, to stand,
When summer smiled upon them in the wood,
And see their little clearing there expand,
And be the masters of the solitude.
Danger was but excitement; and when came
The tide of Emigration, life grew tame;
Then would they seek some unknown wild anew,
And soon, above the trees, the smoke was curling blue.

XXVI.

Long e'er the pale-face knew them, or their land,
Here, too, the redmen met in the stern strife
Of foe to foe and bloody hand to hand—
The mortal agony of life for life :
How fertile is this "dark and bloody ground!"
Here Death has given many a horrid wound!
Here was the victim tortured to the stake,
While dark Revenge stood by, his burning thirst to slake.

XXVII.

Methinks I see it all within yon dell,
Where trembles thro' the leaves the clear moonlight;
Say, Druid Oak, can'st not the story tell?
Why met they thus? and wherefore did they fight?
And wept his maiden much? and who was he,
Who thus so calmly bore his agony?
Sang he his death song well? was he a chief?
And mourned his nation long in notes of lengthened grief?

XXVIII.

Here, from the woods, he came to woo his mate,
And launched, to meet her, his bark-built canoe:
Who would have thought he had a soul to hate
To see him thus, all gentleness to woo?
In tenderest tone he tells his deeds of war,
With blindest feeling shows the ghastly scar
He joyed to take, that he might win his bride,
His own, his blushing one—the dark-eyed by his side.

XXIX.

Again he goes—again she looks for him—
At the death-stake her warrior-love is tied:
Say, when he thought of her, did the tear swim?
Shook, for an instant, that bold Indian's pride?
No! when he thought of her, it was to nerve
A soul whose purpose knew not how to swerve!
For this she loves him, holds him doubly dear;
He knows what 'tis to love, but not what 'tis to fear.

XXX.

O, Love what rhymers has not sung of thee?
And, who, with heart so young as his who sings,
Knows not thou art self-burdened as the bee,
Who, loving many flowers, must needs have wings?
Yes, thou art wing'd, O, Love! like passing thought,
That now is with us, and now seems as nought,
Until deep passion stamps thee in the brain,
Like bees in folded flowers that ne'er unfold again.

XXXI.

Who does not love his early dream of love?—
The passionate fondness of the happy boy,
When woman's lightest look the pulse would move
To the wild riot of extatic joy;
The tremulous whisper, mingling hopes and fears,
Her very presence, that so long endears
The spot, on which the mutual vow was giv'n,
The interchange of love, and the on-looking Heav'n.

XXXII.

This is the tale that never tires in telling—
If woman listens as ye tell the tale:
And then, to mark her gentle bosom swelling,
And feel the fervor of your faith prevail!
Her tone, the confidence of her bright eye,
That looks to yours its eloquent reply!
And then, her seeming doubt—spoke you in vain?
O! no! she only doubts to hear you speak again!

XXXIII.

My Mary! though I yet am young in years,
'Tis like a dream, Love, of the olden time,
When first they coyness yielded up its fears,
And thy warm heart throb'd tremblingly to mine,—
When we exchanged the faith we loved to make,
And made the promise it should never break—
How happy, then, the future rose to view—
Our hearts the auguries that made it seem all true.

XXXIV.

A sense of coldness, like the atmosphere,
When chilled by the rude winter's snowy blast,
Has passed between us now: and—lone and sear,
Like the last autumn leaf that fell at last,
Though on its parent stem it fain would stay,
With days, perchance, as bright as yesterday—
Our hopes have fallen—yet, my Mary, yet,
There is no lethean power can teach me to forget.

XXXV.

For, in that young affection's early dream,
There was the presence and the soul of joy,
Which, like the stars, though clouds obscure them, beam
With hues of Heav'n, that earth cannot destroy:
Dark desolation may be o'er our path,
And the fierce lightnings rive it in their wrath,
And scalding tears may weep their sources dry,
Yet, will that love live on, on its own agony.

XXXVI.

E'en like—if we its hopes may personate—
Fall'n Marius, 'mid the ruins, when he stood
And pondered darkly o'er his desperate fate,
Alone, in th' o'erthrown City's solitude.
Oh! we may build a fairy home for love—
But, when 'tis blasted, how can we remove?
How from the ruins can the ruined part?
Or how rebuild the hope that, falling, crushed the heart.

XXXVII.

And, mused I now, as that stern exile mused,
'Mid fallen columns, cities overthrown,
With Desolation all around diffused,
I should seem less than I seem now alone—
For it would be companionship; but here
There is no sympathy with mortal tear:
The skies are smiling, and the forests rise
In their green glory up, aspirers to the skies!—

XXXVIII.

And the wild river, laughing, laves its banks—
A babbler—like a happy-hearted girl,
Dancing along with free and frolic pranks;
The leaves, o'erhanging, tremble like the curl
That plays upon her forehead as she goes—
While 'mid the branches, free from human woes,
The wild bird carols to its happy mate,
Glad in the present hour, nor anxious for its fate.

XXXIX.

But there is one tree blasted 'mid the green,
Surrounding forest; and an eagle, there,
Looks sadly o'er the gaily, glitt'ring scene,
A mourner—with his bleeding bosom bare:—
No more! no more! he'll reach his eyry now,
Or sport in triumph o'er the mountain's brow;
His wing may hide the death-bolt as he dies,
No more shall it expand to bear him to the skies.

XL.

How like the balmy breathing of the spring,
Is the unfolding of Love's happy morn!
Then our nurst hopes, anticipating, bring
The May-day breaking, that shall bear no thorn:
The thorn must have its birth-day with the rose—
When one is blighted, still the other grows,
And grows the keener, as the seared leaves fall,
And rankles in the heart when the storm scatters all.

XLI.

Be blessings on thee, Lady of my love!
As many blessings as thou did'st impart,
When to my breast thou cam'st like a young dove,
And made thy home in my all-happy heart.
Like the loved picture of his buried maid,
Which the sad lover keeps, and weeps the shade,
So Memory, to my early feelings true,
Preserves its passionate love in bidding hope adieu!

XLII.

No! "while there's life there's hope," at least, in love ;
Hope that the two shall not be always twain :—
Will it not find its home—that parted dove—
Though severed far o'er mountain and o'er main ?
Though night o'ertake it, though the tempests rise,
Alike, through cloudy, and through smiling skies,
Onward it hastens ; and, with panting breast,
Nestles at home at last, and loves the more its nest.

XLIII.

Built o'er the Indian's grave, the city, here,
To all the pomp of civic pride is giv'n,
While o'er the spot there falls no tribute-tear,
Not e'en his kindred drop—the dew of Heav'n.
How touching was the chieftain's homily!
That none would mourn for him when he should die;
Soon shall the race of their last man be run—
Then who will mourn for them ? Alas ! not one—not one !

XLIV.

They all have passed away, as thou must pass,
Who now art wandering westward where they trod—
An atom in the mighty human mass,
Who live and die. No more. The grave-green sod,
Can but be made the greener o'er the best,
A flattering epitaph may tell the rest—
While they who come, as come these onward waves,
Forget who sleep below, and trample on their graves.

XLV.

Yet, who, that ever trod upon this shore,
Since the rude red man left it to his tread,
Thinks not of him, and marks not, o'er and o'er,
The contrast of the living with the dead?
There the tall forest falls—that Indian mound
Will soon be levelled with the ploughed-up ground—
Where stands that village church, traditions hold,
The war-whoop once rang loud o'er many a warrior cold.

XLVI.

Where stole the paddle-plied and tottering bark
Along the rough shores cragg'd and sedge side,—
Where the fierce hunter, from the forest dark,
Pursued the wild deer o'er the mountains wild,—
Now towering cities rise on either hand,
And Commerce hastens by to many a strand,
Not on her white wings, as upon the sea—
Yet borne as bravely on, and spreading liberty.

XLVII.

And here, where once the Indian mother dwelt,
Cradling her infant on the blast-rocked tree,
Feeling the vengeance that her warrior felt,
And teaching war to childhood on her knee—
Now dwells the christian mother: O! *her* heart
Has learned far better the maternal part—
Yet, in deep love, in passion for her child,
Who has surpass'd thine own, wild woman of the wild?

XLVIII.

Our homes, and hearts, and Nature, the blue sky,
Breathe these affections into all who live—
The flowings of their fountains cannot dry.
Who gave us life? 'Tis He, who bids them live!
And they have lived, here, in this forest-bower,
In all the strength, the constancy, the power,
The deep devotion, the unchanging truth
Of Eden's early dawn, when Time was in his youth.

XLIX.

How patient was that red man of the wood!
Not like the white man, garrulous of ill—
Starving! who heard his faintest wish for food?
Sleeping upon the snow-drift on the hill!
Who heard him chide the blast, or say 'twas cold?
His wounds are freezing! is the anguish told?
Tell him his child was murdered with its mother!
He seems like carved out stone that has no woe to smother.

L.

With front erect, up-looking, dignified—
Behold high Hecla in eternal snows!
Yet, while the raging tempest is defied,
Deep in its bosom how the pent flame glows!
And when it bursts forth in its fiery wrath!
How melts the ice-hill from its fearful path,
As on it rolls, unquench'd, and all untam'd!—
Thus was it with that chief when his wild passions flam'd.

LI.

Nature's own statesman, by experience taught,
He judged most wisely, and could act as well;
With quickest glance could read another's thought,
His own, the while, the keenest could not tell;
Warrior—with skill to lengthen, or combine,
Lead on, or back, the desultory line;
Hunter—he passed the trackless forest through,—
Now on the mountain trod, now launch'd the light canoe.

LII.

To the Great Spirit, would his spirit bow,
With hopes that Nature's impulses impart;
Unlike the Christian, who just says his vow
With heart enough to say it all by heart.
Did we his virtues from his faults discern,
'Twould teach a lesson that we well might learn:
An inculcation worthiest of our creed,
To tell the simple truth, and do the promised deed.

LIII.

How deeply eloquent was the debate,
Beside the council fire of those red men!
With language burning as his sense of hate;
With gesture just, with eye of keenest ken;
With illustration simple, but profound,
Drawn from the sky above him, or the ground
Beneath his feet; and with unfalt'ring zeal,
Hespoke from a warm heart and made e'en cold hearts feel.

LIV.

And this is Eloquence. 'Tis the intense,
 Impassioned fervor of a mind deep fraught
 With native energy, when soul and sense
 Burst forth, embodied in the burning thought;
 When look, emotion, tone, are all combined—
 When the whole man is eloquent with mind—
 A power that comes not to the call or quest,
 But from the gifted soul, and the deep feeling breast.

LV.

Poor Logan had it, when he mourned that none
 Were left to mourn for him;—'twas his who swayed
 The Roman Senate by a look or tone;
 'Twas the Athenian's, when his foes, dismayed,
 Shrunk from the earthquake of his trumpet call;
 'Twas Chatham's, strong as either, or as all;
 'Twas Henry's holiest, when his spirit woke
 Our patriot fathers' zeal to burst the British yoke.

LVI.

Isle of the beautiful! how much thou art,
 Now in thy desolation, like the fate
 Of those who came in innocence of heart,
 With thy green Eden to assimilate:
 Then Art her coronal to Nature gave,
 To deck thy brow, Queen of the onward wave!
 And woman came, the beautiful and good,
 And made her happy home 'mid thy embracing flood.⁶

LVII.

Alas! another came: his blandishment,
The fascination of his smooth address,
That read so well the very heart's intent,
And could so well its every thought express,—⁷
Won thy fair spirits to his dark design,
And gave our country, too, her Cataline.
He lives—the Roman traitor dared to die!
Yet, in their different fates, behold the homily.

LVIII.

Rome, torn by civil feuds and anarchy,
Could not endure a traitor on her heart—
For ready Faction, with her argus eye,
Was ever watchful when to play her part;
And Freedom, with a nightmare on her breast,
But show'd she liv'd by groaning when oppress;
And even Cato's energy to save,
Preserved her, but awhile, to sink upon her grave.

LIX.

Far different with our Country! mark the time
When she threw off her trans-atlantic yoke—
Throughout the wide domain of her fair clime,
But one high soldier from his promise broke:
In that free gathering who would not enroll
With all the patriot's willingness of soul?
Our fathers fought for sacred home and hearth!
And were too young in crime to think of treason's birth.

LX.

And when the war had passed, and Freedom raised
Her temple to her worshippers, to bless
Those who had lit her altar fires, that blazed
To light the far untrodden wilderness,
All felt the worship, all confessed the God,
All knew the tyrant, and all curs'd his rod—
And if one heart fell from his promise then,
Why, he might live like Cain, scorned of his fellow men.

LXI.

The Cain of Nations ! be that sov'reignty,
That shall, for any purpose, seek to sever
The glorious union of the brave and free—
That, but for treason, will endure forever !
Her curse shall be the base redeemless lot
Of the once free, who feel that they are not—
Who tread their native soil as native slaves,
And build their bondage house on their free fathers' graves.

LXII.

In such a state, would not a Cæsar rise,
And chain the nation to his gory car,
And pluck from out the blue of our bright skies,
To form his diadem, that falling star ?
Then, one by one, each brilliant light would fall,
And primal chaos desolate them all—
While Tyranny, with loud prophetic shout,
Would wave his bloody sword, as each and all went out !

LXIII.

That free born spirit who could rouse again?
The dried-up fountain and the scorched up field.
The breath, that withers mountain, flood, and plain,
To Nature's revolution learn to yield:
As strong as ever, man may tread the soil,
And sweat for others at his daily toil—
But how shall he regain the gift unbought,
The privilege to act the high resolve of thought?

XLIV.

Say, how shall he regain it, when 'twas giv'n
With broken vow, apostatizing breath?
How stand erect, how look to the bright Heav'n,
Cloth'd in the darkness of that moral death?
Her rights down trod, her star-lit banner rent,
O! where could Freedom find an armament?
How gather, in their glory and their pride,
Her own grey father-band, who, for her, nobly died.

LXV.

United hearts have made united States!
What could a single, separate State have done
Without the arms of her confederates?
Without their glorious leader, WASHINGTON!
They stand united, but divided fall—
'Twas union that gave liberty to all!
Then, who would call mad Discord from her cell,
To scatter poisons there where the world's manna fell!

LXVI.

Proud Venice, by her Doge's solemn rite,
Was wedded to the wave o'er which she rose :
Thence came her lions' all-surpassing might—
A greatness that 'twas glory to oppose.
A peaceful pomp proclaimed her nuptial bands :
Our Country's bond of States, and hearts and hands,
Was signed and sealed before a world amazed,
While, for her nuptial torch, red Battle's bacon blaz'd!

LXVII.

It was a bloody sacrament: Death came
Unto the bridal, like a bidden guest,
The Priestess, FREEDOM, had but bless'd the flame,
E'er the fierce furies to the revel press'd :
The storm grew dark—its lightning flash'd afar—
Murder and Rapine leagu'd themselves with War ;
Yet, proudly and triumphantly, on high,
That eagle-guarded banner waved to victory.

LXVIII.

How fiercely flew that eagle o'er the plain !
Then, Albion, sunk thy lion's lordly crest ;
Behold ! again he shakes his brist'ling mane—
There is a serpent in that eagle's nest,
Seeking to sting her, in the feint to help,
And give her free brood to the lion's whelp—
She strikes the reptile, headless down to earth—
And thus may Treason die, let who will give it birth !

LXIX.

Last of the Signers! a good night to thee!
Alas! that such brave spirits must depart:
Peace to thy ashes—to thy memory
A monument in every living heart.
It gives the spirit strength, endurance, pride,
A lofty purpose, unto thine allied,
No muse upon thy glory—'tis to stand,
As 'twere, upon thy hearth, and hold thee by the hand,

LXX.

And hear thee tell of thy illustrious peers
Who stood beside thee, for our country, there,
Fearless, amidst a host of pressing fears,
And calm, where even Courage might despair.
Ye staked, with this high energy induced,
“Life, Fortune, Honor,” for the public good,
And made your “Declaration” to the world,
And, to the tyrant's teeth, defiance sternly hurl'd.

LXXI.

Alas! the omen—in this awful hour,
While Discord and Disunion rend the land!
Did'st thou take with thee Freedom's priceless dower?
Did'st thou resume the gift of thine own hand,
And bear the affrighted Goddess to the skies?
Are there no mourners o'er thy obsequies?
None, who, with high resolves, approach thy grave?
Or—flits a spirit there, that frights the modern brave?

LXXII.

Say, has our Capital no tarpeian height^s
From which to hurl the traitor? Standing now,
Where once he stood, in patriotic might,
With the fresh laurel wreath upon his brow,
And Freedom burning on his lip of flame ;
Does Pity plead forgiveness for his shame?
Then bear him thence, like Manlius, and be just—
Or go to Vernon's shade, and desecrate its dust.

LXXIII.

Soon must I mingle in the wordy war,
Where Knavery takes in vice her sly degrees,
As slip, away, not guilty, from the bar,
Counsel, or client, as their Honors please.
To breathe, in crowded courts, a pois'nous breath—
To plead for life—to justify a death—
To wrangle, jar, to twist, to twirl, to toil,—
This is the lawyer's life—a heart-consuming moil.

LXXIV.

And yet it has its honors ; high of name
And pure of heart, and eloquent of tongue,
Have kindled, there, with a most holy flame,
While thousands on their glowing accents hung !
And be it mine to follow where they've led,
To praise, if not to imitate, the dead—
To hail their lustre, like the distant star
Which the sad wayworn bless, and follow from afar.

LXXV.

My friends ! how often, in our social talk,
Have we called up these names of spell-like power,
As, arm in arm, we took the friendly walk,
Or lingered out the evening's parting hour—
Or met at the debate, with joyous zest,
To test our strength, and each to do his best;
While pun and prank we gaily gave and took,
With friendship in each heart and pleasure in each look.

LXXVI.

I recollect it well, and lov'd the time,
When we were wont to meet : when last we met,
I parted from you for this western clime,
With the deep feeling never to forget.
In the quick bustle of the busy throng,
I feel that I shall miss ye, O ! how long !
The generous hearts who mann'd my spirit on—
Who sooth'd me when I lost, and cheer'd me if I won.⁹

LXXVII.

Away ! why should I muse in unsooth'd sadness !
While the gay sky is smiling upon earth,
Like a young mother, o'er her infant's gladness,
Blessing the early promise of its birth.
The opening day-dawn breaks along the land,
Like glorious FREEDOM, as her hopes expand ;
While the far mountains tower to meet the glow,
The altar fires are lit, burning on all below.

LXXVIII.

Oh! light up every land, till, far and free,
 Their brave hearts come from mountain and from plain,
 While, with the shout of onward liberty,
 Old Earth to her foundation shakes again.
 The night is gone!—thus Tyranny recedes!—
 The sky is cloudless!—FREEDOM!—like thy deeds:
 A gladness beams o'er earth, and main, and Heav'n—
 Thus look the nations up, their chains, their chains are riv'n.

LXXIX.

Kingdoms are falling! thrones—that have withstood
 The earthquake and the tempest in their shock,
 And brav'd the host of battle's fiery flood,
 Making of human rights the merest mock,¹⁰
 Of blood, of agony, of human tears,
 The daily sacrifice of countless years—
 Are falling: may they fall on every shore,
 As fell the fiend from Heav'n, no more to rise—no more.

LXXX.

Greece gathers up again her glorious band!
 With FREEDOM's loud hurra the Andes quake!
 It swells, like ocean's wave, from land to land—
 Bless them, our Father! for thy children's sake.
 They strike the noblest who shall strike the first—
 Wailing and prostrate, Tyranny accurst,
 Convulses earth with his fierce agonies;
 But, if ye strike like men, the fell dictator dies!

LXXXI.

A tear for Poland ! many tears for her
Who rose so nobly, and so nobly fell !
E'en at her broken shrine, a worshipper,
In dust and ashes, let me say farewell !
Farewell ! brave spirits !—Earth ! and can it be,
Thy sons beheld them struggling to be free—
Unaided, saw them in their blood downtrod—
Nations, ye are accurst ! be merciful, Oh God !

LXXXII.

My HOME ! it needs no prophet voice to tell
Thy coming glories ; they are thronging fast,
Like the enchantments of the Sybil's cell,
Expanding brighter to the very last :
Fulfilling all the patriot's burning vow,
Be free forever my own land as now !
While the uprising nations hail thy star,
And strike, for freedom, that God-sanctioned war.

LXXXIII.

And they may fall—but who shall date thy end ?
Lo ! all the past has giv'n its light to thee ;
Expiring Rome, like a departing friend,
Gave solemn warning to thy liberty :
And e'en the empires, fabulously old
In fruitful fable, have a moral told ;
What say their fallen kings and shrineless God ?
There is no “right divine” in the fell tyrant's rod !

LXXXIV.

Thou learn'dst the lesson, long ago, my HOME,
And taught'st it to a willing, wondering world,
When thy bright stars rose o'er the ocean's foam,
And lit thy banner as it stood unfurl'd;
When, from thy farthest mountain to the sea,
All rose to bless that banner and be free,
Where perch'd thy eagle, in victorious might,
While the proud, lordly lion fled in craven flight.

LXXXV.

Thou hast my heart—and freely do I bow,
To bless thee, Freedom, on thy holiest shrine,
And give to thee devotion's warmest vow;
Oh! let thy spirit mingle into mine:
Thy temple is my country, whose far dome
Circles as high as the Almighty's home—
Here, 'mid the glories of Creation's birth,
Thy altars spread around—this is my mother earth.

LXXXVI.

Glorious! most glorious! proudly let me stand,
With the rapt fervor of a Poet's eye,
And pour my blessings on my native land;
Oh! for the gift to tell thy destiny,
And mould it to the telling—thou should'st rise,
Eternal, as the stars that bless thy skies,
And sparkle in thy banner—thou should'st be
All that thy brave hearts wish'd, who will'd thee to be free.

LXXXVII.

And no protentous, fearful meteor, there,
 Should blaze, and blacken, and create dismay,
 Shaking fierce furies from its snaky hair;
 No!—thou should'st light the Nations on their way,
 And be to them a watchword to fight well;
 And should they fall, as Poland's patriots fell.
 Oh! cheer them with their exile-flag unfurl'd,
 And give them freedom here, in her own Western world.

LXXXVIII.

Auspicious Time! unroll the scroll of years—
 Behold our pious pilgrim fathers, when
 They launch'd their little bark and braved all fears,
 Those peril-seeking, freedom-loving men!
 Bless thee, thou Stream! abiding blessings bless
 Thy farthest wave—Nile of the wilderness!
 And be thy broad lands peopled, far and wide,
 With hearts as free as his who now doth bless thy tide.

LXXXIX.

And may new States arise, and stretch afar,
 In glory, to the great Pacific shore—
 A galaxy, without a falling star—
 Freedom's own Mecca, where the world adore.
 There may Art build—to Knowledge there be giv'n
 The book of Nature and the light of Heav'n;
 There be the Statesman's and the patriot's shrine,
 And Oh! be happy there, the hearts that woo the Nine.

XC.

There is a welcome in this Western Land
Like the old welcomes, which were said to give
The friendly heart where'er they gave the hand ;
Within this soil the social virtues live,
Like its own forest trees, unprun'd and free—
At least there is one welcome here for me :
A breast that pillowed all my sorrows past,
And waits my coming now, and lov'd me first and last.

XCI.

It binds my Eastern to my Western home ;
Then let me banish thoughts that sad would be :
Not like a leaf-borne insect on the foam,
But like a bark upon a glorious sea—
A little bark, perchance, yet firm withal,
'Midst bursting breakers that shall not appal—
I'll bide the coming of a brighter day,
Or, to the far off West, pass, like the past, away.

FINIS.

NOTES.

NOTE I.

“ *The Emigrant, or Reflections,* ” &c.

Mr. Hammond, in the notice which he was so kind as to take of this POEM, suggested the alteration of the title from “Reflections” to “Reveries.” In retaining the first title, I do not do so because I think it best, but merely because it was the first title, and the one under which the extracts were given.

It seems to the author, if he may dare to hazard the remark, that the stanza in which he has attempted to write, has advantages over even the Spenserian stanzas. He understands the latter to be that in which the Fairy Queen, from whose author it takes its name—Beattie’s Minstrel, Thompson’s Castle of Indolence, Byron’s Childe Harold, &c. &c., are written. The following is a stanza of it, from Childe Harold:

The starry fable of the Milky Way
Has not thy story’s purity ; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds. Oh ! holiest nurse !
No drop of that clear spring its way shall miss
To thy sire’s heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our free souls rejoin the Universe.

Here, the reader will perceive that, in a stanza of nine lines, there is a necessity for the second, the fourth, the fifth, and the seventh lines to rhyme together; and that the sixth, eighth and ninth lines must, also, rhyme together. To make the stanza correct, with these complicated embarrassments of rhyme, must not only cause great trouble, sometimes, to the easiest versifier, but to succeed in doing so, critically, he must often sacrifice a happy expression, a striking phrase, or a beautiful line. “Words are things,” says Mirabeau; and, to the poet, they are things of potency. They are at once tools and materials in his headwork.

Any one who has read Childe Harold, must have observed that even the Lord of Poets, with all his powers of language, was often thus hampered, and that, for the sake of preserving the force of an expression, or a striking word, he used what are no rhymes at all, if Monk Lewis’ remark to Scott, “that a bad rhyme is no rhyme,” be true.

Whereas, by making the stanza of but eight lines and having the first four lines to rhyme alternately, and the last four immediately, and by having the concluding line an Alexandrine, as in the Spenserean stanzas, the difficulty, arising from the necessity of having so many similar rhymes, would be obviated, and the poet would have much greater facilities in expressing himself well, without impairing the dignity or strength of what might still be called, from its many resemblances, the Spenserean stanzas; at the same time, the monotony would be avoided, of which criticism has complained so much in the works of Pope and Goldsmith.

Very few readers of poetry, in the first poems which they open, are fond of those, no matter how great their merits, which are written in the Spenserean stanzas. They have to acquire a taste for it. They delight in simpler styles: this is one reason of Scott's great popularity with many persons who seldom read any other poet, except perhaps, Burns. And even to those who have a natural taste for poetry, but who have not much cultivated it, the Spenserean stanza seems complicated, and, I will even venture to say, at first untunable; and it is not at the first perusal that they perceive the beauties of those poems which are written in this style.

These remarks are hazarded very hastily. It would be much more difficult for the author to build the complicated verse of the Spenserean stanza, than this which he has attempted; and, therefore, perhaps, very rashly, he concludes that it would be more difficult for others; and, moreover, we easily persuade ourselves that what is most easily done it is best to do.

NOTE II.

*"But thou art given by the good all-giver,
Blessing a land to be in turn most blest."*

*Thou exulting and abounding river,
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow.*

BYRON.

NOTE III.

*"Here once Boone trod—the hardy Pioneer—
The only white man in the wilderness."*

In a late work entitled "Sketches of Western Adventure," a most interesting account is given of Boone, whose passion for a sylvan life was intense. Like Leather-stocking, it would seem that he always got lost in the clearing, and that only in the forest he knew his way and felt free and unincumbered. Then, like McGregor, "standing on his native heath," he feared no difficulties or dangers. Byron, in his *Don Juan*, calls him "The man of Ross run wild," and says, that he "killed nothing but a bear or buck," but not so; he had many deadly encounters with the Indians, and was repeatedly taken prisoner by them; but he effected his escapes with great tact. The author of "Sketches of Western Adventure," speaking of him, alone in the wilderness, says,

"The wild and solitary grandeur of the country around him, where not

a tree had been cut, nor a house erected, was to him an inexhaustible source of admiration and delight; and he says himself, that some of the most rapturous moments of his life were spent in those lonely rambles. The utmost caution was necessary to avoid the savages, and scarcely less to escape the ravenous hunger of the wolves that prowled nightly around him in immense numbers. He was compelled frequently to shift his lodging, and by undoubted signs, saw that the Indians had repeatedly visited his hut during his absence. He sometimes lay in canebrakes, without fire, and heard the yells of the Indians around him. Fortunately, however, he never encountered them."

Mr. John A. McClung is the author of the above mentioned work. This gentleman is also the author of a novel, entitled "Camden," which has not received half the notice it deserved.

Mr. Flint has now in the press a life of Boone, which will soon be published. I am indebted to him for the following graphic note, concerning Boone:

"This extraordinary man, whose birth is said to have been in Maryland, in Virginia, and in North Carolina, was in fact born in neither; but in Pennsylvania, in Buck's County, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. When he was three years old, his father removed to a water of the Schuylkill, not far from Reading. When he was thirteen years old, his father removed thence to the South Yadkin, North Carolina; and in the midst of the bushy hills of that State the character of this Nimrod was developed.

No historical facts are better attested, than those, to which allusion is here made. The native sagacity, the robust hardihood, the invincible courage and spirit of endurance, put forth on all occasions by the pioneer of Kentucky, were, perhaps, never surpassed by any character on record. These traits were admirably balanced and relieved by a disposition peculiarly mild and gentle. In his old age he removed from Kentucky to the banks of the Missouri. The portrait of him in the capitol is said not to be a correct likeness. He was of the middle stature, of prodigious strength and swiftness, with sandy hair, and a bright complexion, a bold, prominent forehead, aquiline nose and compressed lips. There was a peculiar brightness, an unquenchable elasticity and force visible in his forehead and his eye, even under the frost of eighty winters. His old age was not cheered by affluence, but his departure was neither unhonored, nor unsung. No American character seems to have more chained interest and attention. His life constitutes the theme of Mr. Bryant's 'Mountain Muse,' and he is one among the few, whom lord Byron honored with unalloyed eulogy, in seven or eight of the happiest stanzas of Don Juan."

NOTE IV.

*And should they bear him prisoner from the fight,
While they are sleeping, in the dead midnight,
He slips the thongs that bind him to the tree,
And leaving death with them, bounds home right happily.*

The reader is referred to "Sketches of Western Adventure," page 309, for a most interesting account of the escape of two small boys from the Indians.

NOTE V.

*"How fertile is this 'dark and bloody ground!'
Here Death has given many a horrid wound."*

Kentucky was called the "dark and bloody ground" by the Indians, in consequence of many of the fiercest contests having occurred there; it was the common hunting ground of many of the tribes, and here they frequently met in their excursions, scarcely ever without bloodshed.

At my request, I was kindly furnished with the annexed note by Judge Hall, on the subject of Indian mounds, which should have been inserted under the passage which alludes to them; but the reference at the proper place being accidentally omitted, it is given here. Judge Hall will readily imagine why the author has omitted some passages of the note, which to himself were not the least pleasing.

This gentleman has lately become a citizen of Cincinnati, where those, who knew him formerly but by his high reputation, now feel how much courtesy and kindness increase its charm.

Judge Hall is of opinion that most of the mounds are natural; speaking of them he says:

"There are few objects so well calculated to strike the poetic imagination as these mounds, standing alone in the wilderness. The belief that they are the workmanship of human hands, awakens curiosity and leads to a long train of reflections. For if men have thrown up these singular elevations, we feel inquisitive to know by whom, and for what purpose, they were erected. They are large and numerous; and they bear every mark of great antiquity. Indeed, I am of opinion, that they are as old as the hills.

"Supposing them to be artificial, we are led into a vast field of conjecture. Were they made by the present race of savages, who are ignorant of all the mechanic arts, and disinclined to labor? If so, what inducement could have been placed before them, sufficiently powerful, to break down the barriers of nature, and bring men habitually indolent, to so herculean a task? The Indian, as we see him now, never works. He is the sovereign of the woods, and strides over his heritage with the step of a master, and the wild glance of one who disdains employment. He submits to no restraint but that of military discipline.

Viewing them as artificial, nothing can be more curious; and whether we suppose them to have been graves, or temples, or fortifications, they are equally calculated to awaken feelings of wonder, if not of awe. We see them in the wilderness, where, for ages, savage men alone dwelt, and we behold them covered with majestic oaks, which have flourished for centuries. They have existed here in the silence and repose of the forest, unchanged amid the revolutions which have been carried on around them. They are among the few records of the past. A people ignorant of writing, painting, or sculpture, destitute of the mechanic arts, and without any knowledge of the use of metals, have left few memorials; unless we see them in the mounds, we might, perhaps, say none.

If we suppose them to be natural, which, in my opinion, is the most rational belief, as to the majority of the mounds, they are still attractive, as natural curiosities, and as displaying a wonderful exhibition of the

creative power. Beheld in any light, they are interesting. Whatever may have been their origin, they adorn the monotony of western scenery, and afford employment to the fancy of the traveller. The plodding foot may tread carelessly over them, the uninquiring eye may pass them, unheeded; but the poet and philosopher linger around the hallowed spot where they stand, to catch inspiration, or to gather wisdom from these silent memorials."

Judge Hall further says, "satisfied I am that if ever any rational hypothesis, in relation to these interesting remains of past ages, shall be invented, we shall owe it to the inspiration of the poet, and not to the researches of the philosopher."

It is very certain that no one can confront the traveller who may be speculating upon these mounds, as Edie Ochiltree did the Antiquary, with "I mind the bigging o' it."

NOTE VI.

*"Isle of the beautiful! how much thou art,
Now, in thy desolation, like the fate
Of those who came in innocence of heart
With thy green Eden to assimilate:
Then Art her coronal to Nature gave
To deck thy brow, Queen of the onward wave!
And woman came, the beautiful and good,
And made her happy home 'mid thy embracing flood."*

The allusion, here, is to Blennerhasset's Island, which is beautifully situated in the Ohio. The romantic story of its former inhabitants makes it a spot of great interest to the Emigrant, who, in descending the river, never fails to request that it may be pointed out to him; and it is often the topic of conversation and conjecture to him and his companions for hours after they have passed it. The author is indebted to Morgan Neville, Esq., for the following account of the Island and its unfortunate owner. Mr. Neville's admirable tale of Mike Fink, and his other sketches, have created in the public an appetite for more, which they have long hoped he would be induced to gratify, with longer and more frequent productions; or, at least, that he would collect what he has written into a volume.

"BLANNERHASSET'S ISLAND.—How many recollections of mingled pleasure and pain, does the name of this once beautiful spot, call to mind! In descending the Ohio, I never come in sight of the Island, without sensations almost too powerful to bear; and I linger on the deck of the boat, until the point below snatches it from view. The first impressions were made on me in early youth, and time cannot efface them; on the contrary, the long vista through which I look back to this western "Eden," presents it, probably, with exaggerated colorings of beauty and loveliness. The traveller, as he wanders over the grounds, once consecrated by philanthropy, cannot reconcile it with probability, that a proud mansion, a quarter of a century since, was here erected, dedicated to hospitality, where a priestess, in the person of an elegant and refined lady, shed an influence around that attracted to its portal the stranger from every country. In looking at a scene, now desolate and repulsive, he can

